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STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Approved For Release 2002/09/04 : CIA-RDP80B01676R0004100140003-1

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : DDI.

DATE: 17 July 55

AD/CI *sh*

FROM : Acting Chief, WEA

SUBJECT: Attached *draft* memorandum regarding Alleged Promise of President Roosevelt.

1. It is suggested that this memorandum be classified SECRET IN NO CASE. The reference to the conversation between Harry Hopkins and the Grand Vizier came from unpublished notes at the Roosevelt Library, reluctantly furnished by State Department. The Guillaume-American Ambassador conversation of December 1952 is based on a SECRET S/S INFORMATION ONLY cable.

2. The Historical Research Division of the Department of State supplied most of the documentation. The Office of Intelligence Research and the Office of African Affairs were approached, but supplied no data.

3. A check will be made early Monday with the Historical Research Division to ascertain whether their search included Ambassador Robert Murphy's published or unpublished works. *Nothing additional unearthed here*

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17 July 1955

TO: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: Alleged promises of President Roosevelt regarding Moroccan independence

1. There is no firm documentary evidence available that President Roosevelt promised the Sultan of Morocco that he would assist in obtaining Moroccan independence. However, Moroccan nationalists have frequently alleged that such promises were made during a dinner party given by the President on 22 January 1943 for the Sultan and Prime Minister Churchill at the time of the conference of the Combined Chiefs of Staff held in January 1943 at Casablanca.

2. The most complete account of the conversation between the President and the Sultan is found in Elliott Roosevelt's biography of his father, published in 1946, entitled, "As He Saw It." (pages 110-112). According to this source, the discussion centered on possible American assistance in developing Moroccan natural resources, together with one cryptic remark by the President that "the postwar scene and the prewar scene would, of course, differ sharply, especially as they related to the colonial question." In the chapter of his memoirs dealing with the Casablanca conference, "The Hinge of Fate" Book II, Chapter 15, Churchill makes no reference to the Sultan or the dinner.

3. The economic aspects of the Roosevelt-Sultan conversation are perhaps confirmed by a conversation which took place in Cairo in April 1948 between Al-Tahir al-Ragragi, who claimed to be the legal adviser of the Vizier of the Habous (religious

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properties) in Rabat, and Mr. Ireland and Mr. Glidden of the American Embassy. Ragragi stated that the Sultan's hopes of cooperation with the United States had taken definite form during the Casablanca conference when the Sultan had had a private audience with Roosevelt and Churchill during which the President had expressed his belief that France was finished as a great power. Ragragi proposed that the United States conclude an agreement with the Sherifian government for the exploitation of natural resources by American interests. He assured the American officials that the Sultan was most anxious to consummate such an agreement as an important step in ridding Morocco of French tutelage.

4. In commenting on the post-invasion period in Morocco, the Royal Institute of International Affairs ("Survey of International Affairs 1939-1946, the Middle East in the War") states: "American political personalities, from Roosevelt and Robert Murphy (his envoy to North Africa) downwards... were mindful of the ideal of self-determination which had derived from the Declaration of Independence, through Wilson's Fourteen points of 1918, to inspire the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms; and the President himself set the fashion with a somewhat roseate vision of self-government arising (with American technical assistance) from the soil of French North Africa at the end of the war. The 'oratorical imprudences' attributed to the United States Minister, Robert Murphy, and the wide distribution by the American propaganda services of Arabic leaflets containing the text of the Atlantic Charter and other challenging messages of freedom could

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not fail to encourage the nationalists to believe that their deliverance was at hand. The British...were more reticent..."

5. In a footnote on page 433, the Royal Institute quotes Frank Kelly in the New York Herald Tribune, 20 June 1947: "When in June 1947 the Secretary General of the Arab League revived the claim that the President had given the Sultan a pledge that the United States would ask France for the independence of Morocco, "State Department officials surmised that the Sultan...had probably drawn incorrect inferences from Mr. Roosevelt's undoubted interest in the future self-determination and freedom of colonial peoples.'"

6. Robert E. Sherwood, in "Roosevelt and Hopkins" (pages 689-690), prints an informal account by Harry Hopkins of the Roosevelt-Sultan dinner on 22 January, which contains nothing on the subject of Moroccan independence. The Sherwood account is a condensation of the original Hopkins notes in the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, but the original notes also contain nothing on Moroccan independence.

7. Among the Hopkins papers in the Roosevelt Library are notes prepared by Brigadier General W. H. Wilbur of a conversation on 23 January 1943 between Harry Hopkins and the Grand Vizier of Morocco. The Grand Vizier was accompanied by the Moroccan Director of Protocol, Si Mammeri. The following extracts from these notes are pertinent:

a. The Grand Vizier said, "The Sultan is certain that the war will end in a victory for the U.S.... When the time arrives to discuss the conditions of the peace it is the Sultan's

SECRET 3

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SECRET

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intention to throw himself in the arms of Mr. Roosevelt. Provided Mr. Roosevelt will accept him and his country.

b. "If Mr. Roosevelt accepts, the Sultan proposes to hold a plebescite of his people. The Sultan is certain that all his people both in French and Spanish Morocco will be in agreement and wish to place their future in Mr. Roosevelt's hands.

c. "The Grand Vizier...requested that absolute secrecy be maintained, that he desired that it be presented only to Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Hopkins stated that it would be for Mr. Roosevelt's ears alone.

d. "Mr. Hopkins stated that he could make a general reply now as he is thoroughly familiar with Mr. Roosevelt's views ...The President feels that there is no reason to change the present government of Morocco and has no intention of forcing other changes on any people."

8. Whenever anti-American sentiment has been high in France and/or North Africa, French officials have habitually referred to the 1943 Roosevelt-Sultan interview as the beginning of their troubles in North Africa. Resident General Guillaume, for instance, in discussing with the American Ambassador in Paris on 19 December 1952 the charges that Moroccan nationalists had been allowed the use of the American diplomatic pouch, referred to the 1943 conversation and bluntly stated that the "United States government was working against France in Morocco and in favor of Moroccan independence."

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9. Again, at the time of the deposition of Sultan Mohamed ben Youssef in August 1953 some European newspaper correspondents referred to "promises by the late President Roosevelt to liberate Morocco." STAT

[REDACTED]
HUNTINGTON D. SHELDON,
Assistant Director,
Current Intelligence

Orig: NEA DIV

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